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TOWN OF AYER

2017 DEC 12 PM 6:52

M. M. Gopland

Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee
Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432
Minutes for 11/1/2017

Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor

Members present: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large], Richard Durand (RD) [Parks & Recreation], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk,

Not present: Mark Fermanian (MF) [Planning Board], Julie Murray (JM) [At Large]
APAC taped: NO

6:08 PM – Open Meeting

• **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- RD moved to accept the minutes for 9/6/2017 as corrected; BES 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- RD moved to accept the minutes for 9/29/2017 as amended; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- BES moved to accept the minutes for 10/18/2017 as amended; RD 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

• **Old Business**

- 5 Year Community Preservation Plan Update
 - JP is working on the scope for a Request for Quotes (RFQ) and will circulate a draft when ready.
- Conservation Fund
 - Fall Town Meeting was held on 10/23/2017, and two Articles relevant to CPC successfully passed:
 - **Article 6** was approved to create a Conservation Fund.
 - This will be governed by the Conservation Commission within State guidelines pertaining to the Wetland Protection Act as well as the Community Preservation Act (where CPA funds are involved).
 - **Article 7** was approved to transfer \$500,000 from CPC's Open Space Fund into the Conservation Fund.
 - BAS asked that CPC be notified when the Conservation Commission begins to develop internal 'Policies and Procedures' as CPC should be involved in the process, especially given the transfer of CPC funds into the Conservation Fund as initial seeding.
 - JG will make sure CPC members are notified.
- Historic Ayer Central Fire Station Roof and Cupola Project
 - Fall Town Meeting also voted to pass Article 10, approving the expenditure of \$30,000 in CPC funds for the renovation portion of the Fire Station project.



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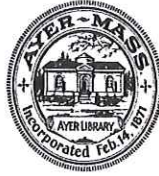
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- **New Business**

- Sandy Pond School Association (SPSA)

- Irv Rockwood, Vice President of SPSA, presented an update.
 - Recent key events for the historic schoolhouse include:
 - Listing on the National Register of Historic Places, 5/8/2017.
 - Funded by SPSA and a grant from the Town of Ayer.
 - Completion of a Conditions Assessment, prepared by Spencer & Vogt, 5/2017.
 - Funded by a CPC grant, approved by Town Meeting.
 - Three Open Houses (5/13, 7/8, 9/9/2017).
 - Promotional materials provided by grant of the Ayer Committee of the Massachusetts Cultural Council.
 - The Conditions Assessment was key to understanding the steps that need to be taken to renovate, repair, and ensure the long-term preservation of the schoolhouse.
 - Spencer & Vogt estimated the total cost of recommended/required work at approximately \$263,700.
 - This work was broken down into two phases, to be undertaken over a roughly 4-year period:
 - **Phase I**, estimated at \$110,886, is for urgently required “Emergency Work” to preserve the building:
 - 1) The first and most vital step for repair and renovation is structural work on the foundation.
 - Over the 150 years of the schoolhouse’s existence, the long granite slabs that serve as the foundation have exhibited a pattern of slow and uneven settling.
 - This is especially true for the SE corner of the building, where there is an inch+ of settling greater than the rest of the foundation.
 - This, in turn, affects the integrity of the walls, which are pulling away in some areas, the ceiling, and so forth.
 - Hence, masonry stabilization of the foundation is necessary before other repairs can be made.
 - Mr. Rockwood said this work would involve drilling test wells around the foundation, minor jacking up of the building, and trenching and underlayment work under the current slabs.
 - 2) Classroom ceiling repair and replacement.



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- Mr. Rockwood said the ceiling is failing to such a degree that it probably needs complete replacement.
- The original ceiling is lath and horsehair plaster.
 - It may not be possible nowadays to find horsehair plaster to replace the original, and an alternative might need to be considered.
- Mr. Rockwood will investigate this further to see what is necessary to meet historical requirements.
- 3) Electrical work for fire safety and security.
- 4) Site improvements for drainage.
- **Phase II**, estimated at \$152,778, is for "Future Work" that will enhance the workability and usability of the building.
 - There is currently no heating in the building and this is something that could be remedied to make it usable year-round.
 - There is also no restroom facility.
- Mr. Rockwood said the ultimate goal of the SPSA is not only to preserve the building but to re-open it for public use on a regular, ongoing basis as an historic site and a cultural resource.
 - Options being considered are use of the building for local elementary school students to experience a "Day in a 19th Century Schoolhouse."
 - Other single-room schoolhouses in Massachusetts already have such programs which, if properly designed, also fulfill a State local history requirement.
 - Mr. Rockwood said he envisioned the building becoming a kind of community center for meetings and community events in addition to tie-ins to the local school system.
- For the purpose of this meeting, though, Mr. Rockwood was focused on preliminary steps to seek funding for Phase I.
 - SPSA will be seeking more than the estimated \$110,886 since unanticipated surprise costs are likely.
 - SPSA plans to submit applications for funding to CPC as well as these other sources:
 - Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts
 - These grants, which can include historic work, typically have a cap of \$20-25,000, though grants in the range of \$5-10,000 are more common.
 - Applications for this grant must be submitted in February or March.



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- Massachusetts Preservation Project Fund
 - MPPF has a lot of complicated parameters that must be met for grant applications.
 - These grants cap at \$50,000, and they typically want matching grants available, covering 75% of the project cost, before they make an award.
- JP suggested Mr. Rockwood also check the Roy Park Foundation (Ithaca, NY) as a potential funding source.
- In addition, BAS suggested SPSA approach the Cultural Council for financial support to host fundraising events – for example, something like a silent auction, at a local place like the Bull Run, to broaden outreach and public support.
- JP went through the time-table for an application for CPC funding.
 - With a goal of a vote to be taken at Spring Town Meeting (May 2018), CPC would need a completed application by February, so that it could hold a Public Hearing no later than April.
 - Mr. Rockwood said he anticipated having an application ready possibly in December.
 - He was reassured that both CPC applications, for applicability and for actual funding, can be submitted at the same time.
- BAS also suggested that SPSA consider options such as putting the land itself into conservation.
 - This would expand management and liability to the Town and might help SPSA offset some of the maintenance costs.
 - In turn, the outer grounds could potentially serve as a pocket park.
 - The grounds would also have to be altered for school bus maneuverability.
 - Mr. Rockwood mentioned there is a strip of the parcel where ownership is uncertain, and might be owned by the Town already.
- Grant Agreement for Historic Ayer Central Fire Station Roof and Cupola Project
 - JP is working on the draft.
 - The Agreement should mention C. Donnell Homes in addition to the Ayer Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED).
 - BAS asked that the Agreement specify stages during the project where inspections to approve the historic design and construction process will be required.
 - This is to ensure that the outside restoration work covered by the CPC grant meets the historical criteria of the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation.



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- The inspections will likely be done by Alan Manoian, Director of OCED, and/or the Building Inspector.
- JP will ask for input in identifying and specifying these oversight stages from Mr. Manoian as well as the Ayer Historical Commission.
 - JP will circulate the draft Agreement to CPC members when ready for review.
- New permitted use of CPA Funds
 - JP sent material to Jeff Thomas, Ayer Parks Director, and Jason Mayo, Chair of the Parks Commission, detailing how CPA funds were recently permitted for use in demolishing and rebuilding a playground in Waltham.
- **Committee Updates**
 - Historical Commission (BES)
 - The new plaque has now been mounted by the Town Hall WTU fountain.
 - Housing Authority (JP)
 - A well-attended BBQ was recently held for Ayer's senior housing residents.
 - Parks & Recreation (RD)
 - Plans are now being developed for a new building for Parks & Rec.
 - Conservation Commission (JG)
 - A new Conservation Administrator has been hired and is being trained.
 - Planning Board
 - No report available.
 - Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee (BAS)
 - Its next meeting will be 11/14, at 7:30 p.m.
- **7:07 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - CPC's Next Meeting: December 6, 6 p.m.
 - BES moved to adjourn; BAS 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date Minutes Approved by Community Preservation Committee:

12/6/2017

Signature Indicating Approval:

Jessica G. Gugino